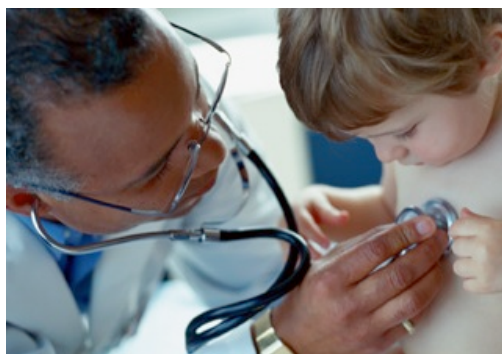



[Modules/Features](#)
[Specialties](#)
[Prices & Packages](#)
[Help Center](#)
[Company](#)


WRS Cloud EMR Offers Shelter During Storm

Here's a question for medical providers:
are your health records safe during a superstorm like Hurricane Sandy?

By Sandra Levy

If you haven't yet implemented Waiting Room Solutions Cloud EMR, you had good reason to be anxious about whether your paper records or in-housed client server were safe and how you were going to communicate and care for patients during the widespread and enduring power outages. Not to mention, the floods and fires that ensued in the wake of Hurricane Sandy and its deadly aftermath.

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, President Barack Obama declared numerous towns in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut major Federal Disaster areas. **Where millions of businesses lost power, WRS Cloud EMR was equipping medical care providers with the tools necessary to carry on their practice as usual.**



Touching Base With Patients

Sound Hearing Center, a solo ENT practice located in Lakewood Township, NJ relied on Waiting Room Solutions EHR during Sandy's attack

No Worries

Even practices in Florida, which fortunately did not get the brunt of Sandy, were concerned about the impact of the storm. Palm Beach Cardiovascular Associates located in Palm Beach Gardens, is home to Richard Faro, M.D. and Joseph Motta, M.D. Their Florida based practice was anticipating problems with WRS when they learned that Hurricane Sandy was about to make landfall in New York, where the Waiting Room Solutions headquarters is based. "Here we are prone to bad weather. Even with the storms, as long as we have electricity, we really have been able to utilize WRS, which is phenomenal for us because to lose our computer —would pretty much shut us down. We haven't had any times when that has occurred to us and we're very happy with that. When Sandy was coming up the coast, we had 45 mph winds with the heavy rains. We had our power flicker, go out and come right back on, so we caught the periphery of the storm. We didn't get hit with Sandy like we had with hurricanes in the past, but we continued to have access to WRS EMR. Of course, we were happy that Sandy wasn't going to hit us, but when we heard it was going to hit New York, we got nervous. We came in on Monday expecting that we would have to adjust our workflow because WRS would be down, but we did not have any problems. **We had access to all of the patients' charts. Waiting Room Solutions held up well for us,**" said Cindy Adams, Office Manager.

Flood Proof

Yet another provider who is relying on Waiting Room Solutions Cloud EMR to protect her practice from any catastrophic events is Toni Pratt Reid, ARNP at Family Health Care & Minor Emergency Clinic in Oklahoma. Fortunately, she was spared the devastating bit of Hurricane Sandy, but the practice recently had to deal with a major flood. "Last month we had a devastating storm that

Sakina Jaffari, an assistant to S. Moosa Jaffari, M.D., explained, **"Our area was hit hard. We didn't have power in Lakewood for a week, but WRS was working.** Our phones are connected through cable so we weren't able to take phone calls, but I had power at home so I logged online to Waiting Room Solutions and called patients from my cellphone to cancel their appointments. I was able to touch base with my patients and see how they were doing and tell them, "We'll call you on Monday and we'll reschedule."

Open For Business

Hurricane Sandy ravaged Rockland County, NY where numerous medical practices were not able to open because of widespread power outages. Richard Gordon, M.D., of Ophthalmology Associates in Pomona was able to maintain business as usual with WRS. "We have a secondary Internet line in the office, so even though the cable modem was out, the DSL kicked in and we were still able to see patients. We have a generator in the office, so the two together worked beautifully for the three days we were without power and cable Internet service. It was reassuring to know that we could still access our data from anywhere, answer patient questions and refill prescriptions even when we are not in the office, and still provide care during the outage," said Dr. Gordon.



Mind you, **not every EHR Company guarantees that a practice will be invincible in a hurricane because not all Health Systems are alike.** Aaron Hartle, DNP, FNP, and owner of Pace Clinic in Springville, Utah found this out the hard way. "My previous system came on a downloadable CD. You couldn't access it from any other computer. All data was stored just on that one computer. If your computer dies, so does all your information. And you can't access it from anywhere else, which was annoying as well. You couldn't Prescribe. You couldn't network with it at all," said Hartle.

Always Running

Dr. Jason Bradley mirrored Hartle's sentiments about the necessity of using a cloud EHR even if a storm is not threatening. Pointing out that his practice, Washington Street Wellness Center, in Iowa, used a standalone client based EHR for over ten years.

Bradley stated, "I wanted an online system. I liked the idea of the cloud. I liked the idea of letting technology serve us rather than us serving the technology. I liked the mobility. There's a lot that I like about Waiting Room Solutions EHR. I didn't want my records to be stored internally. I wanted to be able to access them from anywhere. I didn't want to rely on our own computer because of the possibility of failure. We are a small office. If one thing breaks it's a big deal as far as cash goes. Today, WRS is always running. It gives you the peace of mind that none of the information will be lost. We had problems with the other program we utilized before. We lost some information and that was a big worry too."

A look at the experience of Derrick Wallace, M.D., during Hurricane Sandy opens a window on the **numerous advantages of implementing WRS Cloud EHR.** Dr. Wallace's practice, Ear, Nose & Throat Solutions of New Jersey is located in Nutley, which endured severe power outages when Sandy barreled through.



"The utility poles were down. Trees were all over the place. All of Nutley was out of power. There are five different practices in my building and we were the only office that could call patients and tell them about our situation.

"The utility poles were down. Trees were all over the place. All of Nutley was out of power. There are five different practices in my building and we were the only office that could call patients and tell them about our situation. Another doctor in the building had a different EHR system than I. He came upstairs, and said, 'I can't believe you guys are working. Which EMR are you using?' He wasn't even able to login to his system from his house. I never saw someone so upset. He couldn't see or reschedule patients," said Jennifer Mendez, Dr. Wallace's medical assistant.

Mendez was able to access Waiting Room Solutions EHR from her home to find the names of the patients that she needed to contact. "I was able to do everything. We came to work every day. We had power in two rooms in our office, as well as the Internet and the phone. We saw many patients during the week. We were able to access their records. It was a little dark, and we were scared at the beginning, but when I came in on Monday and I logged onto WRS, I said, 'Dr. Wallace, don't worry, we are going to book patients. We are going to see patients!' We started calling patients and since we are on the second floor and the elevator was not working, we only scheduled patients who were able to walk up the stairs. We explained, 'It's a little dark, there's only light in two rooms, but you can come in.' We were seeing the patients like we normally do despite the devastation."

Brad Hall, Systems Administrator of Waiting Room Solutions, explained how their cloud Electronic Health Record software company was able to operate without a glitch during Sandy and its destruction. "When deciding on a site to host WRS, disaster planning was a top priority. The site we chose was in a high flat area that is not prone to flooding, in a building situated alone, with no nearby obstructions. Our system is designed with three layers of power redundancy. A battery on each rack, a larger battery for the main data center power supply, and four train engine sized diesel power generators for when utility power is lost for any significant amount of time. The data center has fiber connections to several different geographically dispersed areas, ensuring if one connection is lost, another is not," said Hall.

Emergency Safeguards

Yet another physician who has taken measures to safeguard her practice from emergencies is Kendall Genre, M.D., who practices in New Orleans, Louisiana where Hurricane Katrina's devastating blow in 2005 is still being felt. "I've never taken hand notes. I didn't want to have an office full of notes. If we got flooded or if I had to leave (because of a flood evacuation) my notes could get lost. That is worrisome in terms of accessibility. I have Waiting Room Solutions. Its cloud based, so if something happens to my computer, doesn't matter. My patient information is not going to get lost. If I have to evacuate for a hurricane, my patient information is not getting lost in my office with a flood. I wanted something that was portable so that I could login if I was somewhere else. You can get access anytime you can go online, so that's very helpful," said Dr. Genre.

Shelter From The Storm

Cristina Garcia, practice manager at Peter V. Choy M.D. and Ricardo O. Calonge M.D. LLC, a Miami, Florida practice that specializes in Internal Medicine couldn't agree more that WRS Cloud EMR is an insurance policy in a storm. Located just a stone's throw away from a scenic bay, the practice previously had a program that Dr. Choy's friend had written for him. "We were using it, but it was strictly just for the office visits. We had separate software for billing. When we had problems with that program, we would use paper. Many times the software would get stuck. That's what drove us to find a new system. It was constantly getting jammed and we would have problems with it. When patients came in we would put vital signs in the system and the doctor would write his notes in that program. We were able to scan some tests. Our cloud EMR is way better than what we had before. WRS is amazing. **There's peace of mind that none of the information will be lost. With the other program we had before, we lost some information and that was a big worry.** The doctors love WRS. It's fantastic. They can look at everything right there from wherever they are, including any part of the patient's record," she said.

Practice Anywhere

Dr. Joe Flint, M.D., owner of Delavan Pediatrics in Chicago recently implemented WRS. "In the short time my practice has been open we have not had any occurrences that interrupted our access to the WRS system. However, being a cloud system, should an event occurred that displaced me from my regular practice location, I know that as I long I have access to the Internet, I can continue practicing from anywhere," stated Dr. Flint.

Hurricane Lessons

It appears that Hurricane Sandy is providing many lessons that will go a long way in helping providers protect their practice and patients in the future. The experience of large

hospitals, like New York University Langone Medical Center, which had to evacuate 300 patients during the height of the storm due to power outages, sheds light on the life saving benefits of a cloud EHR system. During the Superstorm, patients there were reportedly transported with only a summary of their records, since NYU lacked power to print out full records and telephone problems made it difficult to get in touch with their doctors to review plans. Kent Sepkowitz, Sloan-Kettering Vice Chairman of Medicine for Clinical Affairs reportedly admitted that it took some time to get familiarized with the patients.

Finally, implementing WRS Cloud EHR is not only a lifesaving tool during a disastrous storm, but it can also enhance a provider's ability to care for patients during the long run. Dr. Melvin Wiederkehr, an Otolaryngologist who has been practicing for over three decades in Brooklyn, New York said, "A couple of houses had downed trees and they lost power. It is a feeling that you are helpless. WRS worked perfectly. We were open on Sunday. I saw patients the day of the hurricane. All of the prescriptions went through. I had no problem." said Dr. Wiederkehr.

Peering In The Crystal Ball

Where and when will another storm hit? It's anyone's guess. **One thing is clear: Physicians who implement a cloud EHR like Waiting Room Solutions are in a better position to weather a storm and to provide better patient care.**

Like0

[. \(#\)](#)

Tweet0

[. \(#\)](#)

0

[. \(#\)](#)

1 (#) (#)